

English Section



Editor : Diljit Singh 'Bedi'

DAYS COMMEMORATING HISTORICAL EVENTS (16th November to 15th December)

16 November	After spending 3 years and six months at Paonta Sahib, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib reached Anandpur Sahib.	(16-11-1688)
17 November	(a) Death of Baba Budha Ji at Ramdas town. (b) Cremation of the Head of the Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib at Anandpur Sahib. (c) The first election of S.G.P.C. completed.	(17-11-1631) (17-11-1675) (17-11-1920)
18 November	(a) <i>Guru Ka Bagh</i> agitation won by Sikhs. (b) S.G.P.C. declared <i>Damdama Sahib</i> (Talwandi Sabo) as the fifth Sikh <i>Takhat</i> .	(18-11-1922) (18-11-1966)
19 November	(a) Maharaja Ranjit Singh captured Peshawar. (b) Sikhs, led by Jathedar Kartar Singh Jhabbar liberated Gurdwara Panja Sahib (Hassan Abdal).	(19-11-1818) (19-11-1920)
22 November	Battle of Ram Nagar between the Sikhs and the British.	(22-11-1848)
24 November	(a) Sri Guru Arjan Dev laid the foundation stone of Kartarpur, district Jalandhar. (b) The Sikhs took out the protest march at Delhi against Nehru's remarks about Sikhs.	(24-11-1594) (24-11-1960)
25 November	Akali Silver Jubilee Conference, held at Jandiala (Jalandhar) and opposed the demand of Pakistan.	(25-11-1944)
26 November	The Sikh leaders rejected new constitution of India and refused to sign.	(26-11-1949)
28 November	Indian Government stated that 2239 Sikh soldiers had been Court martialled and 98 been regularly tried for their crime to protest against Operation Blue Star in 1984.	(28-11-1985)
3 December	Bhai Maharaj Singh chalked out a plan to attack cantonments at Jallandhar and Hoshiarpur.	(3-12-1849)
4 December	The Sikh raised Pro-Punjabi Suba slogans at Nehru's rally in Rajpura, 15 Sikhs were arrested.	(4-12-1960)

7 December Baba Banda Singh Bahadur and about 700 of his companions arrested, chained and taken to Delhi. (7-12-1715)

8 December Central Sikh League formed at Lahore. (8-12-1919)

11 December Akali Dal appointed a committee to draft the policies of the 'Dal' in the changed circumstances. (This committee drafted the famous Anandpur Sahib Resolution). (11-12-1972)

12 December (a) Ahmed Shah left our Homeland after humiliating defeat at the hands of Sikhs in Punjab. Kabuli Mal appointed as Governor of Punjab. The Sikhs became defacto rulers of their homeland. (12-12-1762)
(b) 53 *Mahants* gathered at Amritsar and decided to oppose the Sikh Gurdwara Reforms. (12-12-1920)

Appeal

The devotees are requested to bring the 'PAVAN BIRS' of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Old ones for SANSKAR) to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Bhawan, Gurdwara Ramsar Sahib complex near Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj Baba Deep Singh Ji 'Shaheed' only instead of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib. This has been decided to facilitate the 'SANGAT' for the Holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Newly published) are available at the same venue.

-Guru Panth Da Das-

**Secretary,
Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee,
Amritsar.**

In continuation with the last edition:

SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR SAHIB JI (1621-1675)

-S. Surjit Singh 'Gandhi'

We are taking pleasure while publishing these contents from the book '*History of the Sikh Gurus*' by S. Surjit Singh Gandhi former Head of Sikh History Research Board (SGPC).

Malcolm and Cunningham

Malcolm and Cunningham basing their conclusions on the information supplied by the author of Siyar-ul-Mutakhkhirin has written: "Choosing for his haunts the waste between Hansi and Sutlej, he subsisted himself and his disciples by plunder."

It has also been alleged by some scholars that the Guru Ji encouraged the refractory elements of the country to enter his service and prepared the people in general for a rising against the Government. But before anything substantial could be achieved he was overpowered, taken captive and brought to Delhi under a strong military escort. The statement has been rejected. Macauliffe and I.B. Bannerjee and many other scholars have said that Guru Ji being just a Tyagi, a lover of meditation and solitude could not have done all this. We do not approve of their approach as it ignores the heroic and warrior aspect of Guru Sahib personality. As a matter of fact, the Guru Ji was a supreme embodiment of both Bhakti and Shakti in the manner of his great father.

Ghulam Hussain's statement is inaccurate

The most effective manner of repudiating the views of Ghulam Hussain is on the basis of historical facts and the tenor of Dharma-ideology of the Guru Ji. The statement of Ghulam Hussain suffers from serious factual inaccuracies. The Guru Ji did not make common cause with Adham as he could not do it because the faqir had since long left India for Medina and passed away (1642). The Guru Ji even on his own did not raise any special army to come into clash with the Mughal Government.

Ghulam Hussain's another statement, companions were mendicants

In fact the Guru Ji had neither the intention nor the means of leading any insurrection against Emperor Aurangzeb. The author of the Siyar-ul-Mutakhkhirin admits in unambiguous

words that "The companions of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji moved about like mendicants. The wearing of swords and arms was not customary among them." And the rebellion could not be expected to succeed against the great Mughal Empire without a strong trained army equipped with necessary arms.

No coercion no extortion

It is possible that the Guru had a few of the persons from the army of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib But certainly these persons did not insist on 'extortion or coercion' of the people. Sri Guru Hargobind Ji and Sri Guru Har Rai Ji maintained their armies out of their devotees' offerings, could Guru Tegh Bahadur not do so ? Besides this, 'coercion and extortion' even in special circumstances and as a means to righteous ends, did not fit in with the essentials of Dharma as understood by the Sikhs. Coercion and extortion imply unprovoked aggression on less strong people. Could we be justified in believing that the author of the slogan 'fear not and frighten not' aggressed against un-offending people to secure subsistence for his militia even assuming that there was no other evidence in the form of his own writing and Sikh tradition to prove that he did not. Apart from the substantial body of his poetry incorporated in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, we have available to us a large number of Hukamnamas Which deal with secular matters but nowhere the Guru Ji had betrayed the compromises for worldly requirements if he had made any.

The Guru Sahib's motif was neither political nor personal

Dr. Fauja Singh's remarks in this connection are very pertinent "In a situation such as this where the cause had such a wide appeal there was and should be no need of resorting to coercion and extortion as a means of subsistence. Living on the contrary in that case would have the only interpretation that it was just an acceptance of voluntary offerings (Ugrahi).' There is no doubt that thousands of people, when he travelled in Malwa and Bangar, swarmed round the Guru Ji but they cannot be taken as soldiers of revolt. No contemporary record shows that there was any outbreak of revolt on the part of the Sikhs, although under the impact of the Guru Sahib's preachings, the process of mass awakening had set in. The Guru Sahib's motif in doing so against the Mughal Government was neither personal nor political power nor subsistence by coercion and extortion as stated by Siyar-ul-Mutakhkhirin but was preparing the people for the protection of righteousness (Dharamyudh) against the tyrannical (Adharmik) policies of Aurangzeb.

THE STORY OF KASHMIRI PANDITS

On May 25, 1675, a deputation of sixteen Brahmins headed by Kirpa Ram son of

Arhu Ram reached Chak Nanaki (Anandpur). They waited upon the Guru Ji and told him how keen Aurangzeb was to convert the land of Kashmir into the land of Muslims, and in obedience of the firman of Aurangzeb how cruelly Iftikhar Khan, the Governor of Kashmir, was implementing the contents.

There is a strong tradition that Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, on hearing the heart-rending tale of Kashmiri Pandits, was deeply absorbed in pondering over the problem. Suddenly, the young Sri Gobind Rai Ji entered the Durbar and was astonished at the complete silence reigning everywhere. After a brief pause, he quietly enquired from his father as to the cause of this silence. The Guru Ji explained to the boy the agony of the Pandits and significantly remarked that the only way was that some great person should make supreme sacrifice. Instantaneously, did the boy ask his father whether there was anybody more worthy of this sacrifice than he himself. The hint was very clear. The Guru Ji appreciated the bold and courageous reply of his son and forthwith decided to offer himself for the sacrifice. He told the Brahmins to go to their homes and tell the authorities that they would have no objection to changing their religion if Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was first prevailed upon to embrace Islam.

Issue of Kashmiri Brahmins was not the cause

From this, the conclusion was drawn by some historian that the Guru Ji made up his mind to suffer martyrdom for them or for the Hindu religion alone. The protagonists of this view quote Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji in their support. Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji did a miracle in the Kali Age by protecting the, frontal mark and sacred thread of the Sikhs'. But this view is unfounded To regard the appeal of the Kashmiri Brahmin as the sole cause of the Guru Sahib's sahib execution is to misjudge the real cause of the Guru Sahib's execution as also to circumscribe the width of the Dharamyudh ideology. The truth appears to be that the advice of the Guru Ji to Kashmiri Brahmins brought the matter to the fore. The process of spreading Sunnie ideas and converting the people to it, particularly in the places contiguous to north-western frontier and Punjab where the orthodox section of the Muslims was the strongest, received a severe jolt and setback at the hands of the Guru Ji.

Order of Aurangzeb

The intelligencers reported all this to the Emperor. Busy as he was in quelling the Pathan rebellion in north-western frontier¹, he had neither the time nor perhaps the inclination to make extensive enquiries about the proceedings of the Guru Ji. He was, as we know, already suspicious of the Sikh Movement, which his grandfather, Emperor Jahangir, wished

to put an end to at one stroke and which it was in keeping with his policy and orders "to put down the teachings and public practice of the religion of these mis-believers." He, therefore, readily believed all the reports of his intelligencers and wrote to the governor of Lahore to arrest Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and ordered that he might be fettered and detained in prison.² The Lahore governor passed on the imperial order for compliance to Dilawar Khan, the faujdar of Sirhind, who in turn asked the circle Kotwal of Ropar, Nur Muhammad Khan Mirza, in whose police jurisdiction lay Anandpur to arrest the Guru Ji. The order, however was kept secret³,

The Guru Ji, apprehending all this, conferred guruship on his son on 8th July, 1675. According to Bhat Vahi Talauda Pargana Jind and Guru Kian Sakhian, the Guru Ji performed the installation ceremony by offering the usual marks of Guru-ship: a Tilak on the forehead, 5 pice and one cocoanut. Having done, the Guru Ji voluntarily left Chak Nanaki on 10/11 July 1675. He was accompanied by Bhai Mati Das Ji, Bhai Sati Das Ji and Bhai Dayal Das Ji. It is not precisely known as what prompted the Guru Ji to leave Chak Nanaki. Irvine basing his inference on the information furnished by Ferukh-Siyar Nama says that the Guru Ji intended to proceed to the Ganges to bathe. However, the probable view is this that the Guru Ji hoped to see Emperor at Delhi, plead the case of the non-Muslims with him, and in the event of the Emperor's unfavourable reaction suffer the consequences.⁴

Notes and References

1. On the 17th April 1674, Aurangzeb had to leave Delhi for Hasan Abdal where he reached on the 26th June, 1674. The purpose of the Emperor was to restore Imperial prestige in the Pathan land from Qandhar to Attock where the different tribes had defied the Mughal authority, had risen in open revolt against it. Aurangzeb stayed there from June 1674 to Dec. 1675.
2. Siyar-ul Mutakhkhirin.
3. Irvine: Later Mughals , i, p. 79; Mohammad Ahsan Ijad's FerrukhSiyari Nama, f. 13 a.
4. The Emperor at that time was in the north-west frontier considering the difficulty of communication in that age, it is not surprising that the Guru had no idea about the exact whereabouts of the Emperor. The normal expectation was that he would be at his capital, Delhi.

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